

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2020

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Global Deployment of United States
Combat-Equipped Armed Forces**

June 9, 2020

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of United States Armed Forces equipped for combat.

***MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SUPPORT OF UNITED STATES COUNTERTERRORISM
EFFORTS***

In furtherance of counterterrorism efforts, the United States continues to work with partners around the globe, with a particular focus on the United States Central and Africa Commands' areas of responsibility. In this context, the United States has deployed forces to conduct counterterrorism operations and to advise, assist, and accompany security forces of select foreign partners on counterterrorism operations. In the majority of these locations, the mission of United States military personnel is to facilitate counterterrorism operations of foreign partner forces and does not include routine engagement in combat. In many of these locations, the security environment is such that United States military personnel may be required to defend themselves against sporadic terrorist threats or attacks, and deploy United States military personnel with weapons and other appropriate equipment for their force protection. Specific information about counterterrorism deployments to select countries is provided below, and a classified annex to this report provides further information.

***Military Operations against al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and Associated Forces and in
Support of Related United States Counterterrorism Objectives***

Since October 7, 2001, United States Armed Forces, including Special Operations Forces, have conducted counterterrorism combat operations against al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and associated forces. Since August 2014, these operations have targeted the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which was formerly known as al-Qa'ida in Iraq. In support of these and other overseas operations, the United States has deployed combat equipped forces to several locations in the United States Central, European, Africa, Southern, and Indo-Pacific Commands' areas of responsibility. Such operations and deployments have been reported previously, consistent with Public Law 107–40, Public Law 107–243, the War Powers Resolution, and other statutes. These ongoing operations, which the United States has carried out with the assistance of numerous international partners, have been successful in seriously degrading ISIS capabilities in Syria and Iraq. If necessary, in response to terrorist threats, I will direct additional measures to protect the people and interests of the United States. It is not possible to know at this time the precise scope or the duration of the deployments of United States Armed Forces that are or will be necessary to counter terrorist threats to the United States.

Afghanistan. United States Armed Forces remain in Afghanistan for the purposes of stopping the reemergence of safe havens that enable terrorists to threaten the United States, and supporting the Afghan government and the Afghan military as they confront the Taliban in the field. In February, the United States took significant steps towards achieving peace in Afghanistan by reaching an agreement with the Taliban that was coordinated with Afghanistan's National Unity Government, and by releasing a joint declaration with the Government of Afghanistan. These

commitments represent an important step to a lasting peace in a new Afghanistan and create a path forward to end the war in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, United States forces remain committed to our longstanding security relationship with the Government of Afghanistan and are training, advising, and assisting Afghan forces; conducting and supporting counterterrorism operations against al-Qa'ida and against ISIS; and taking appropriate measures against those who provide direct support to al-Qa'ida, threaten United States and coalition forces in Afghanistan, or threaten the viability of the Afghan government or the ability of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces to achieve campaign success. The United States remains in an armed conflict in Afghanistan and against the Taliban, and active hostilities remain ongoing.

Iraq and Syria. As part of a comprehensive strategy to defeat ISIS, United States Armed Forces are conducting a systematic campaign of airstrikes and other necessary operations against ISIS forces in Iraq and Syria and against al-Qa'ida in Syria. A small presence of United States Armed Forces remains in strategically significant locations in Syria to conduct operations and secure critical petroleum infrastructure, in partnership with indigenous ground forces, against continuing terrorist threats emanating from Syria. United States Armed Forces in Iraq continue to advise, coordinate with, and provide support to select elements of the Iraqi security forces, including Iraqi Kurdish security forces. Support to Iraqi security forces includes training, equipment, communications support, and intelligence support. United States Armed Forces also provide limited support to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization mission in Iraq. Actions in Iraq are being undertaken in coordination with the Government of Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government, and in conjunction with coalition partners.

As reported in January, I directed a strike in Iraq targeting Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force, in response to an escalating series of attacks by Iran and Iranian-backed militias on United States forces and interests in the Middle East region. I directed this action to protect United States personnel, to deter Iran from conducting or supporting further attacks against United States forces and interests, to degrade Iran's and Qods Force-backed militias' ability to conduct attacks, and to end Iran's strategic escalation of attacks on and threats to United States interests.

Arabian Peninsula Region. A small number of United States military personnel are deployed to Yemen to conduct operations against al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS. The United States military continues to work closely with the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) and regional partner forces to degrade the terrorist threat posed by those groups.

United States Armed Forces, in a non-combat role, have also continued to provide military advice and limited information, logistics, and other support to regional forces combatting the Houthis in Yemen. Such support does not involve United States Armed Forces in hostilities with the Houthis for the purposes of the War Powers Resolution.

United States Armed Forces are deployed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to protect United States forces and interests in the region against hostile action by Iran or supporting groups. These forces, operating in coordination with the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, provide air and missile defense capabilities and support the operation of United States fighter aircraft. The total number of United States forces in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is approximately 3,600.

Jordan. At the request of the Government of Jordan, approximately 3,145 United States military personnel are deployed to Jordan to support Defeat-ISIS operations, to enhance Jordan's security, and to promote regional stability.

Lebanon. At the request of the Government of Lebanon, approximately 40 United States military personnel are deployed to Lebanon to enhance the government's counterterrorism capabilities and to support the counterterrorism operations of Lebanese security forces.

Turkey. United States Armed Forces remain deployed to Turkey, at the Turkish government's request, to support Defeat-ISIS operations and to enhance Turkey's security.

East Africa Region. In Somalia, United States Armed Forces continue to counter the terrorist threat posed by ISIS and al-Shabaab, an associated force of al-Qa'ida. Since the last periodic report, United States forces have conducted a number of airstrikes against al-Shabaab, and remain prepared to conduct airstrikes against ISIS terrorists. United States military personnel also advise, assist, and accompany regional forces, including Somali and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces, during counterterrorism operations. United States Armed Forces are deployed to Kenya to support counterterrorism operations in East Africa. Following the January 2020 attack on United States Armed Forces and interests in Manda Bay, Kenya, additional United States Armed Forces personnel and equipment were deployed to Kenya to increase force protection measures. United States military personnel continue to partner with the Government of Djibouti, which has permitted use of Djiboutian territory for basing of United States Armed Forces. United States military personnel remain deployed to Djibouti, including for purposes of staging for counterterrorism and counter-piracy operations in the vicinity of the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, and to provide contingency support for embassy security augmentation in East Africa, as required.

Lake Chad Basin and Sahel Region. United States military personnel in the Lake Chad Basin and Sahel Region continue to conduct airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations and to provide support to African and European partners conducting counterterrorism operations in the region, including by advising, assisting, and accompanying these partner forces. Approximately 760 United States military personnel remain deployed to Niger.

Cuba. United States Armed Forces continue to conduct humane and secure detention operations for detainees held at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, under the authority provided by the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (Public Law 107-40), as informed by the law of war. There are 40 such detainees as of the date of this report.

Philippines. United States Armed Forces deployed to the Philippines are providing support to the counterterrorism operations of the armed forces of the Philippines.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN EGYPT

Approximately 460 United States military personnel are assigned to or supporting the United States contingent of the Multinational Force and Observers, which have been present in Egypt since 1981.

UNITED STATES AND NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION OPERATIONS IN KOSOVO

The United States continues to contribute forces to the Kosovo Force (KFOR), led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in cooperation with local authorities, bilateral partners, and international institutions, to deter renewed hostilities in Kosovo. Approximately 640 United States military personnel are among KFOR's approximately 4,000 personnel.

I have directed the participation of United States Armed Forces in all of the above-described operations pursuant to my constitutional and statutory authority as Commander in Chief and as Chief Executive (including the authority to carry out Public Law 107-40, Public Law 107-243, and other statutes), as well as my constitutional and statutory authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with congressional leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to these deployments, and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

DONALD J. TRUMP

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Michael R. Pence, President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

Categories: Communications to Congress : Combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces, letter on global deployment.

Subjects: Afghanistan : Former regime; Afghanistan : Reconciliation efforts; Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Armed Forces, U.S : Servicemembers :: Deployment; Chad, U.S. military detachment; Cuba : Guantanamo Bay, U.S. Naval Base :: Detention of alleged terrorists; Djibouti, U.S. military detachment; Egypt : U.S. military detachment; Iraq : Security cooperation with U.S.; Jordan : Security cooperation with U.S.; Kenya, U.S. military detachment; Kosovo : KFOR international security force; Lebanon : U.S. military detachment; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Philippines : Security cooperation with U.S.; Somalia, U.S. military detachment; Syria : U.S. and coalition airstrikes; Terrorism : Al Qaida terrorist organization; Terrorism : Counterterrorism efforts ; Terrorism : Counterterrorism efforts; Terrorism : Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization; Turkey : Counterterrorism efforts, cooperation with U.S.; Yemen : Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP); Yemen : Security cooperation with U.S.

DCPD Number: DCPD202000435.